

Message Text

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ACTION PM-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 SS-20 SPC-03 ACDA-19 L-03 SAJ-01

EA-11 NEA-11 AEC-11 H-03 MC-02 OMB-01 TRSE-00 CIAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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INFO USMISSION NATO

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AMCONSUL LENINGRAD BY POUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 1105

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PARM UR US

SUBJ: USA INSTITUTE COMMENTATOR ON NEW TARGETING POLICY

REF: A. MOSCOW 15727

B. IR 6 901 0813 73

C. STATE 12682

1. SUMMARY: INCONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF JANUARY 22, M.A. MIL'SHTEIN, CO-AUTHOR OF RECENT SSHA MAGAZINE ARTICLE ON SALT (REFTELS A AND B), EXPRESSED VIEW THAT NEW TARGETING POLICY ENUNCIATED BY SECRETARY SCHLESINGER ON JANUARY 10 IS A NEW STRATEGY AND A STEP IN THE WRONG DIRECTIONS. END SUMMARY

2. MIL'SHTEIN NOTED HIS DIFFICULTY IN UNDERSTANDING TARGETING POLICY PRESENTED TO PUBLIC ON JANUARY 10 BY SECRETARY SCHLESINGER AND WAS PERSISTENT IN HIS QUESTIONING ABOUT WHAT IT MEANT. HE COMMENTED THAT POLICY HAD BEEN PRESENTED AS A FAIT ACCOMPLI, WITHOUT SUPPORTING ARGUMENT. CITY-SPARING STRATEGY OF MCNAMARA DURING EARLY 1960'S, WITH WHICH NEW POLICY COULD BE COMPARED, HAD AT LEAST BEEN PRESENTED AS A SOMEWHAT TENTATIVE DOCTRINE
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WHOSE CREATORS STOOD READY TO SEE THEIR ARGUMENTS REBUTTED IF

CONVINCING REASONS COULD BE FOUND FOR DOING SO.

3. MIL'SHTEIN VENTURED OPINION THAT AMERICAN OBSERVERS WERE PROBABLY HAVING AS MUCH DIFFICULTY DECIPHERING STATEMENT AS ARE SOVIET OBSERVERS. HE ADDED THAT ONLY BY READING BETWEEN LINES HAD HE COME TO AN UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT SCHLESINGER HAD BEEN ATTEMPTING TO CONVEY. WHAT HE FOUND, HE NOTED, WAS A "NEW STRATEGY, A STEP IN THE WRONG DIRECTION, A BAD DEVELOPMENT."

4. EMBOFF COUNTERED (ALONG LINES REFTEL C) THAT IN HIS UNDERSTANDING SCHLESINGER STATEMENTS HAD NOT BEEN BEGINNING OF NEW STRATEGIC DOCTRINE, BUT MERELY, AS SCHLESINGER HIMSELF HAD STATED, AN EFFORT TO INTRODUCE NEW FLEXIBILITY INTO THE ALREADY EXISTING DOCTRINE. MIL'SHTEIN REMAINED UNCONVINCED, QUESTIONING WHETHER EITHER SIDE WOULD STOP TO COUNT WHETHER "ONE OR TWELVE" BOMBS HAD FALLEN BEFORE MAKING DECISION ON WHAT TYPE OF COUNTERATTACK TO MOUNT.

5. COMMENT: THOUGH MIL'SHTEIN EXPRESSED PERSONAL CONCERN ABOUT THE U.S. TARGETING POLICY, HIS NUMEROUS REFERENCES TO DIFFICULTY OF UNDERSTANDING MEANING OF SECRETARY SCHLESINGER'S STATEMENTS MAY INDICATE THAT HE HAS NOT YET FULLY MADE UP HIS OWN MIND ON HOW TO INTERPRET THEM. HOWEVER, HIS COMPARISONS WITH MCNAMARA'S CITY-SPARING POLICY, HELD BY SOVIET OBSERVERS TO HAVE BEEN CLEARLY A COUNTERFORCE OPTION WITH FIRST-STRIKE IMPLICATIONS, SHOW THAT HE LEANS STRONGLY TOWARD AN INTERPRETATION OF THE SCHLESINGER STATEMENTS AS BEING A STEP AWAY FROM THE MUTUALLY ASSURED DESTRUCTION DOCTRINE. INTERESTINGLY, MIL'SHTEIN PARRIED ANOTHER EMBOFF'S OWN PERSISTENT QUESTIONS ABOUT WHETHER THE SOVIETS HAD ACCEPTED THE MUTUALLY ASSURED DESTRUCTION DOCTRINE BY STATING THAT "THIS WAS NOT IMPORTANT."
END COMMENT

6. WE UNDERSTAND FROM PROFESSOR FRED WARNER NEAL, WHO IS HERE AT THE INVITATION OF THE USA INSTITUTE, THAT HE WAS REPEATEDLY ASKED ABOUT THE MEANING OF SECRETARY SCHLESINGER'S COMMENTS BY HIS CONTACTS HERE, INCLUDING KORNIYENKO OF THE USA DIVISION OF MFA. NEAL HAD NOT READ THE SCHLESINGER REMARKS SO WAS UNABLE TO COMMENT.

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